



File Code: 1900

Date: November 26, 2010

Dear Interested Party,

The Forest Service is proposing multiple-use forest management activities within the Morrison Run project area (please see attached Map 1, Project Area and Vicinity) on the Allegheny National Forest (ANF), Bradford Ranger District. The purpose of this Scoping Letter is to inform interested parties of the proposed activities, including tree harvesting, reforestation, improvements to the transportation system, wildlife habitat and riparian habitat improvement, the removal of non-native invasive plants, and scenic vista clearing. Please see the attached Scoping Proposal and maps for more detail. This information is also posted on the ANF website: http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/projects/vegetative_management/

I invite you to provide comments about your site-specific concerns related to the Morrison Run project proposal. The Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) and I will identify Significant Issues related to the proposed action based on the comments received during the Scoping Period.

The following criteria are used to identify Significant Issues:

Screen 1: Issue or Non-issue

- **Issue:** A point of disagreement, debate, or dispute with the Proposed Action based on undesirable effects.
- **Non-issue:** General concerns or opinions that are not related to the Proposed Action's effects, and, therefore, cannot be resolved through consideration of an alternative or mitigation.

Screen 2: Non-significant or Significant

- **Non-significant:** Issues that are: (1) beyond the scope of the Proposed Action; (2) irrelevant to the decision to be made; (3) already decided by law, regulation, or policy; or (4) conjectural in nature or not supported by scientific evidence.
- **Significant:** Issues that go beyond the criteria for being identified as non-significant.

Significant issues received from the public are used to formulate alternatives to the Proposed Action.



Your comments are important to me and they will be considered for the project. Please address your comments to the ID Team Leader: Michelle Tamez, USDA Forest Service, Allegheny National Forest, 29 Forest Service Dr., Bradford, PA, 16701. Comments will also be accepted by electronic mail addressed to: comments-eastern-allegheny-bradford@fs.fed.us. Please have **Morrison Run** in the subject line and include your name, phone number, and physical mailing address with your correspondence. Oral or hand-delivered comments must be received within our normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **To be considered, comments must be postmarked, or otherwise received, no later than December 31, 2010.** Comments received, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and available for public review.

In addition to informing you of the availability of the Morrison Run Scoping Proposal in this letter, I would also like to make you aware that the project proposal includes the creation of seven temporary openings that exceed 40 acres (see pages 4-5 of the Scoping Proposal), which are proposed to regenerate northern hardwood stands that have undergone significant decline due to beech bark disease mortality. Pursuant to regulations outlined in 36 CFR 219, the 2007 Allegheny National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (page 68) identifies that temporary openings be less than 40 acres, except: (1) on an individual sale basis after 60 days public notice and review by the Regional Forester; (2) as a result of natural catastrophic condition, such as fire, insect and disease, or windstorm; and/or (3) in management areas that specify a smaller size.

A legal notice will soon be posted in the *The Bradford Era* (Bradford, Pennsylvania newspaper) which will begin the 60-day public notice. This notice is not an opportunity to comment on the Morrison Run Project or the proposal to create temporary openings that exceed 40 acres. Comments on the Morrison Run Project should be submitted during the Scoping Period (which formally ends December 31, 2010) and the formal comment period for the project's environmental analysis, which is scheduled to be released in March 2011.

I, Anthony V. Scardina, Bradford District Ranger, am the responsible official for this project. I expect to make a final decision on this project proposal or an alternate proposal by June 2011. Actions could be implemented 5 to 15 days following a potential appeal disposition.

Sincerely,

/s/ Anthony V. Scardina
ANTHONY V. SCARDINA
District Ranger